

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-23 (Canceled).

Claim 24 (New): A method for treatment of diseases caused by activation of immunocompetent cells, comprising administering to a patient in need thereof a therapeutic agent comprising, as the active ingredient, an immunocompetent cell activation inhibitor comprising an antibody to osteopontin or peptide fragment thereof.

Claim 25 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein the antibody to osteopontin or peptide fragment thereof is an antibody capable of inhibiting the binding between an integrin recognizing the site of amino acid sequence RGD and osteopontin or fragment thereof, and also inhibiting the binding between an integrin recognizing the site of amino acid sequence SVVYGLR and osteopontin or fragment thereof.

Claim 26 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein the osteopontin or peptide fragment thereof is an N-terminal fragment of osteopontin.

Claim 27 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein the osteopontin or peptide fragment thereof is a peptide that contains a peptide of the following (A):

(A) RGDSVVYGLR (SEQ ID: No.1).

Claim 28 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein the osteopontin or peptide fragment thereof is a peptide that contains a peptide of the following (B):

(B) VDTYDGRGDSVVYGLRS (SEQ ID: No.2).

Claim 29 (New): The method according to of claim 24, wherein the immunocompetent cells are NKT cells.

Claim 30 (New): The method according to claim 29, wherein said inhibitor inhibits IFN- γ production by the NKT cells.

Claim 31 (New): The method according to claim 29, wherein said inhibitor inhibits MIP-2 production by the NKT cells.

Claim 32 (New): The method according to claim 29, wherein said inhibitor inhibits IL-4 production by the NKT cells.

Claim 33 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein the immunocompetent cells are neutrophils.

Claim 34 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein the immunocompetent cells are T cells.

Claim 35 (New): The method according to claim 34, wherein the T cells are CD4⁺ T cells.

Claim 36 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein said inhibitor inhibits Fas/FasL mediated cell injury.

Claim 37 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein said inhibitor inhibits neutrophil mediated cell injury.

Claim 38 (New): The method according to claim 24, wherein the diseases caused by activation of immunocompetent cells are selected from the group consisting of hepatitis, asthma, arthritis, diabetes, lupus, multiple sclerosis, arteriosclerosis and lung fibrosis.

Claim 39 (New): The method according to claim 38, wherein the disease caused by activation of immunocompetent cells is hepatitis.

Claim 40 (New): The method according to claim 39, wherein the hepatitis is viral hepatitis or drug-induced hepatitis.

Claim 41 (New): The method according to claim 39, wherein the hepatitis is autoimmune hepatitis.

Claim 42 (New): The method according to claim 39, wherein said inhibitor inhibits necrosis of hepatocytes.